then if the father says his son has done wrong his neighbours reply: "You have caused him to do wrong yourself. Did you suppose him to be a boy that you did not provide marriage-cattle for him?" Then the father becomes more ready to pay damages for his son.' And again, 'If a young man finds that his father objects to his marrying the girl he loves, he complains to his father's neighbours (*perugtoma abagalomani ko pasie*). Then they discuss the matter and say to the father: "Do you want him to teach you a lesson by taking a chief's wife or daughter, for whom many cattle must be given?" So the father agrees.'

Neighbours are concerned, too, to see a fair distribution of a deceased fellow's estate, and the fulfilment of the heir's obligations to his wards. 'It is not the relatives, but "the fathers of the village" who watch over a young boy's interests when his father is dead' (*vide infra*, p. 208). We listened to one discussion of a quarrel over inheritance which was believed to have led to kinsmen working sorcery against each other. At this discussion four village neighbours of the sick man (thought to be suffering from the sorcery of his father's brother's son), as well as two relatives, attended.

The father's neighbours are also asked to mediate when a son has wronged his father and seeks forgiveness. For example, Mwangubola's son had committed adultery with his father's wife. He paid six head of cattle and then went off to the coast, where he remained a long time. When he returned he brought two cows and approached his father's neighbours, asking them to take the cows to his father. When they took the cows his father said: 'He must find a bull as well, and brew beer, because he is my eldest son.' So he got a bull and brewed beer, and the father also brewed. 'Then', said the old man who reported the case, 'the fathers of the village came together and the bull was killed and they ate the meat and drank the beer. . . . Thus the son made friends with his father.'

Here we have the ritual of reconciliation between relatives in which neighbours of the senior must participate, for their anger is held to be as dangerous to the junior as that of his senior relative. Informal giving of advice merges into the practice of arbitration, and of murmuring against a wrong-doer, and thus, it is thought, causing him misfortune. These latter practices are discussed in ensuing chapters.

villages—they begin among boys of ten to fourteen herding cows, and continue among young men until marriage, but they are said never to continue after that, and are regarded simply as a substitute for heterosexual pleasure. 'A man never dreams of making love to another man'—only of making love to a woman. If a boy's own father, or a village father, finds a son with another youth he will beat him, but provided both parties were willing, there is no court case, and the older man treat the practice informally as a manifestation of adolescence. To force a fellow to have homosexual intercourse against his will is a serious offence, comparable to witchcraft (male Document, p. 196). Lesbian practices are said also to exist, but we have no certain evidence of this: if they do occur it is much more likely to be among the older wives of chiefs and other polygynists than among the girls, who have so much attention from young men.'

It is in conversation and play with village contemporaries that some knowledge of sex is acquired. Girls learn about sex from their immediate seniors, and they get some sex experience, along with formal instruction on morals, at the puberty rituals of their seniors in the age-village and at their own initiation. Boys learn from the conversation of their older fellows at night, in the boys' village. Any suggestion that sex education should be given by parents or middle-aged teachers shocks the Nyakyusa profoundly, for they hold that discussion of sex is totally incompatible with the respect due from children to parents. The taboo on sex talk between members of different generations appears to be absolute among men, but is less emphasized among women, for formal instruction on morals is given to a girl by her mother's fellows during the initiation ritual, and a young wife of her father, or of her father's neighbour, may whisper advice on sex matters even although she is classed as a 'mother'.

As we have already indicated, there are profound differences between pagans and Christians in their sex code. The Christian dogma that sex relations should only take place between adult married persons excludes the freedom of girls to have external sex relations before betrothal, or in the 'bride's' hut; it excludes girls visiting their betrothed husbands before puberty; and it excludes homosexuality, which is regarded as a mortal sin. Segregation of successive generations is not a part of the Christian tradition, hence the modifications in the rules of avoid-

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1931 FN1? Ngonde FN1? Nyakyusa

This practice of having official witnesses to every contract, and summoning them to give evidence should a dispute later arise, is one of the most important means of maintaining order in Nyakyusa society, and village neighbours are the usual witnesses.

c. Communal responsibility of the age-village

Formerly, in Nyakyusa law two forms of group responsibility were emphasized: the mutual responsibility of kinsmen, and the mutual responsibility of fellow villagers. A case of murder or manslaughter was primarily the concern of the agnatic lineage if the victim was a male or an unmarried girl, and of the lineages of both husband and father if the victim was a married woman. The kinsmen either killed the murderer, or brought him before the chief, who imposed a fine which went to the injured relatives. The Nyakyusa make a distinction between 'spearing by day' (direct physical injury) and 'spearing by night' (witchcraft); and only in the latter type of case did the fine go to the chief. Witchcraft was thus treated as an offence against the state—the chiefdom—while murder or manslaughter was an offence against the kinsmen of the dead. The concern of the state in witchcraft, and the joint responsibility of kinsmen on the one hand, and of fellow villagers on the other, was evident when, as sometimes happened, both groups were required by the chief to clear themselves of suspicion of witchcraft by each providing a representative to take the poison ordeal. Should the representative of either group fail to vomit then the responsible individual within that group was sought out by means of divination and the ordeal (*vide supra*, p. 116).

In a case of adultery the injured husband, together with his kinsmen, pursued and attempted to kill, or torture and kill, the adulterer: self-help was not only permitted but expected in this situation,[1] and a man's near kinsmen were obliged to assist him. Neighbours were not obliged to assist in executing vengeance, but they might be victims of it, for if the injured husband did not find the adulterer he might kill any village-mate of his enemy. Such an attack commonly led to war between the two villages;

[1] D. R. MacKenzie, *The Spirit-Ridden Konde* (1925), p. 61, says: 'The injured husband has the right to inflict death on the paramour. This is no mere tale of the past but a grim fact to-day . . . cases of this nature are very numerous.'

I:Wilson E-9(1936-1938)193! FN!? Ngonde FN!?
Nyakyusa

684 and were informants suggested that it only occurred between the
676 villages of different chiefs, though others insisted that it did occur
721 between villages of the same chiefdom. Indeed any seduction of a woman of another village was liable to lead to war. A man of Bulimbanaje seduced the wife of the headman of Bujoga, Mwamsamba. The men of Bulimbanaje returned the woman to her husband, saying to their fellow: 'The men of Bujoga are harmless (*kanyepe*), it's a village of fathers, she's your mother' (cf. Documents p. 180). But Mwamsamba was angry and made war. The men of Bulimbanaje protested, saying: 'We brought the woman back!' but he took no notice and attacked them. He was defeated, and fled.

685 A thief or an obstinate debtor was also a danger to his neigh-
686 bours. For a victim or creditor living in another chiefdom, and so
696 unable to obtain satisfaction in a chief's court—since a chief paid little attention to a complainant who was not his own man—might seize the wife of any village-mate of the man who had his property. Hence, the old men say, thieves and adulterers were liable to be banished from a village,[1] just like witches and sorcerers, for they too brought misfortune on their fellows.

672 War between villages was apparently the usual upshot of an
696 attack on the village neighbour of an enemy, but occasionally a settlement was arranged between the two villages concerned, and the adulterer or thief was held responsible for compensating his injured neighbour, or the latter's kinsmen. Kalunde and Mwalubanje explained: 'In the old days if a man ran off with my wife I should go and kill a village-mate of his. That means, "Go, you villagers and look for my wife." Yes, this happened even in a village of my own chief. Then the villagers would go and look for my wife and when they found her with their neighbour they would bring her back to me with a spear or bow as compensation. The man they would accuse, saying: "It was you who killed your fellow", so that he would have to make peace with the family of the dead man, not I. He would give them a daughter of his own to wife, or else pay ten cows, and they would be relatives then. Yes, ten cows they paid for a man's death, though only two for a woman in marriage.' Here the differing responsibilities of kinsmen and fellow villagers are evident.

621 The village was a fighting unit taking up quarrels on its own
701

[1] A cattle thief caught in the act was speared. . . . MacKenzie, op. cit., p. 84.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN1
Nyakyusa

7. HOMOSEXUALITY

X (an exceptionally reliable informant)

838 'When a boy sleeps with his friend they sleep together; it is not forbidden. Everyone thinks it all right. Sometimes when boys sleep together each may have an emission on the other (*bitundanila*). If they are great friends there is no wrong done. If a boy has an emission on his friend in his sleep without the friend knowing there is no case. Boys sometimes agree to dance together (*ukukina*) and work their evil together and that also is no wrong. But they fear very much to dance thus because their parents will be angry, saying: "You are learning adultery; you will be fools when you grow up." Boys do this when they are out herding; then they begin to dance together and to have intercourse together. But there is something which is a great wrong—if one [684] boy, perhaps out herding or perhaps in the boys' village at night, catches hold of his fellow and has an emission on him (*nukutundila*) then it is a great case, involving a fine. One who has been forced by his fellow will tell his parents and they will take him to the village headman to inform the headman. It is a great case and the boy who forced his fellow pays a bull or perhaps a cow. They say that to force [754] a fellow thus is witchcraft (*bo bulosi*); he is not a woman. But when they have agreed and dance together, then even if people find them they say it is adolescence (*lukulilo*), all children are like that. And they say that sleeping together and dancing is also adolescence.

'This custom is mostly among children, it is forbidden for men to sleep together. They do not fear lest when they have soiled a friend they will pay; no, they fear to be shamed. Not many cases of grown men having intercourse together come to light, but only of boys together or of a man and a boy. Some, during intercourse, work in the mouth of their friend, and have an orgasm; those do very, very great wrong. Some have intercourse in the anus, some between the legs—there are many who practise this latter form and this is what boys mostly do. That of the mouth people do very rarely when they dance together, because one who does it may have a great case against him.

'A person never dreams of making love to another man but only when two youths sleep together on a mat, then something evil may take place between them, at night during sleep. Perhaps when one has dreamed that he is having intercourse with a woman but he has been caught and not finished, he soils his friend.

'And when out herding, some of the older boys do evil with the

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

young ones, the older ones persuade the little ones to lie down with them and to do that which is forbidden with them between the legs. Sometimes two older boys who are friends do it together, one gets on top of his fellow, then he gets off and the other mounts. All this which they do together or with a junior is a small wrong. When their parents find them they reprove them and tell them it is forbidden, they beat them a little. But when a little boy is caught hold of by an older boy against his will, and he tells that so and so caught him and had intercourse (*ukulogwa*) with him then the older boy will be fined, perhaps a bull.

'It is altogether forbidden to do evil to a fellow by night. The boy who has been so treated will be angry and run off to the court, and he who did evil to him will be fined. He will pay one cow, because they say it is forbidden to do evil to your fellow by night. There are some who, when they have dreamed at night of a woman, wake up and catch hold of a friend, and have intercourse with him.'

A and J.

A and J agreed that homosexuality occurred frequently in boys' villages. 'A boy has intercourse with his fellow, but a grown man? No, never, we've never heard of it. They always want women; only when a man cannot get a woman he does this, only in youth. A few men do not marry but they are half-wits who have no kind of intercourse at all.

'And there is one famous case in the hills of a man who, though not mad, dresses as a woman; but he has no intercourse either with men or women.'

A case was also quoted of a doctor in Tukuyu who 'is a woman; she has borne children, now her body has grown the sexual organs of a man and her feelings have changed also; but she keeps it very secret, she is spoken of as a woman.'

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

36. MOVING

Mwanjala.

'Lukama's father had built in the country of the chief, Mwaikuju, and Lukama moved and went to the country of Mwasyika. He returned to Mwaikuju's of his own accord, and when he had been there a considerable time his wife fell ill, so he moved again to Mwasyika's. After three months his fellows came to fetch him, and they put him into his own old house. They told him to choose whether he would go to his own old homestead, or to another, and of his own accord he chose to build on another site, but he occupied his own old house temporarily. After a year and a half had passed, his wife fell very ill again, and he went to Mwasyika's. He had been there a month when his fellows—those from his other age-village (in Mwaikuju country)—came to fetch him. They put him into another man's house and he lived with him there. He ate his own food for he was the owner of the homestead—a stranger eats of the bananas of strangers. After he had been there some time, but before he had built a house, his wife fell ill again, and he went to Mwasyika's country where he is still.'

In reply to a question: 'It is customary to fetch a man who has moved because people mostly move on account of illness. Hence, the man's fellows say: "If we do not fetch him it appears as if it were we who had driven him away, as if we had done that which caused him to move."'

Kimbolela.

'Mwapefya moved and went to Mwankenja's country. He moved on account of his own illness. Before he had been away long his fellows (i.e. village neighbours) went to fetch him. He was only away perhaps four or five months. When they brought him back they put him into his old house, for no one had taken it. He took his food from where he had cultivated previously, for as he had not been away long there were still sweet potatoes in his field. He came the first time they went to fetch him.'

Details from various informants, in reply to a question about three new huts being built.

'Three young men have just moved from the village of Mwafula to the village of Mwamunda, because someone had accused them, saying

166 621
166 684
[p. 267]

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

166 684 "You're making love to my wife", and the man who made the accusation was from the family of the chief. On account of this, they said: "The chief is driving us out. Let us move." All three moved because of this case and are building here. Of the three friends who were supposed to be seducing the minor chief's wife, one had been found at night-time in the suspected woman's hut, and had been fined 12s. for "making love to the woman" though they had not been found together.'

Record of G. W., 20/4/35 (from various informants).

754 683 166 'The chief Mwaipopo was sick, and living "in the forest", i.e in a recently settled and cultivated area at a distance from the main population of his chiefdom. Nsusa, one of the headmen of his classificatory son and heir Mwankuga (cf. p. 183) went to see him. On his return Nsusa said to Mwankuga: "Mwaipopo told me that you, Mwankuga, were poisoning him. Mwkanyamale (a doctor) says that your doctors are in the hills, you went to fetch them there." Then Mwankuga went to his father Mwaipopo and asked him: "Is it true that you are accusing me of working sorcery against you? Do you say so yourself?"

'Mwaipopo said: "Who told you of this Mwankuga?"

'Mwankuga: "Nsusa told me."

'Mwaipopo: "It was Nsusa who told me that you were working sorcery against me! Go and ask him about it, and have it out with him."

'So Mwankuga took the case to Mwakisisya (another chief) for arbitration.

'Mwakisisya said: "Nsusa is in the wrong and must pay a cow to his chief Mwankuga."

Nsusa refused.

'So Mwakisysya said: "All right, we shall go to those who know about the case", and he came with all his men to Mwenanganga, Mwaipopo's senior village headman (i.e. the representative of Mwansambe, *vide* p. 181). There a witness gave evidence, saying: "I was with Mwankuga when Nsusa told him that Mwaipopo accused him of sorcery." Nsusa denied it.

'Mwakisisya said: "I, Mwakisisya, I have finished, Nsusa must pay a cow."

'Nsusa still refused.

'Mwankuga: "Your honour the judge, and others. I have cows, I shall not ask for his cow, but let him leave my country and build elsewhere."

'Nsusa replied that he was hoeing near Mwaipopo in the forest, and

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

764 Besides fighting, the dancers indulge in an orgy of destruction,
535 slashing at the bananas and *ficus* saplings (which surround the
721 swept courtyard) with their spears.

764 The dance was thus, traditionally, a common form for the ex-
535 pression by the dancers of a considerable range of emotions, vary-
152 ing from an intolerable burden of grief and fear to a recognition of and salute to the warlike quality of the dead man and a vivid consciousness of their own. And this last feeling passed easily into actual fighting.

764 To-day it is not so much into the excitements of warfare that
534 the feelings turn, but rather into those of love. Burial dances are
832 the occasions of much sexual display, of the beginning of some love affairs and the consummation of others, and this is nothing new. 'At a death people did not want war (though it came sometimes), they wanted love-making: they displayed the pride of their strength!' 'We speared one another . . . our wives called the war-cry when they saw the strength of their husbands.'

177 Dances of sexual display, on occasions other than burials, are
535 traditional among the Nyakyusa; but all our informants are
837 unanimous in declaring that both these other dances and the dances of burial are far more frequently followed by lovers' meetings than they used to be. For the enforcement of peace among the Nyakyusa has been accompanied by the prohibition of violence of any kind; and this has freed sexual passion from its rigid traditional bonds. Girls are married young and engaged younger; and
• [684] while formerly any man who seduced or even flirted with another man's betrothed or wife was speared or tortured by the husband and his friends if they caught him, such punishments are now illegal and the present fine of cattle is a far less effective deterrent. 'In the old days love-making only went on in secret; if a man stood and talked to a woman he expected to be speared. But now the Europeans have introduced the custom of making love openly!' (i.e. by forbidding the previous penalties.)

764 For all the younger men and women, save the chief mourners
535 and close friends, the quality of the burial dance is now pre-
832 dominantly and openly sexual. But the older people are, on the one hand, more conscious of its warlike associations and, on the other hand, inclined to regard the whole occasion more soberly than their juniors. 'There are two reasons for coming to a burial: the old men come to mourn their friend, they say: "Let us go and mourn him"; but the young men say: "Let us follow the

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
KuKwe

house. Then she goes in and steals a piece of firewood from the loft[1] and runs off with it, laughing. The officiant pursues her and makes her drop it and gives her medicine, while the company cry: 'A thief, a thief!' She takes the firewood back to her husband's home. 'It is a sign that she has entered her father's house, just as the spear is a sign that she has entered the house of another husband.' In rich families the new husband sends a bull which is killed and eaten at the ritual.

Our informants were agreed that 'there is no fear of the gasping cough if a woman runs away from her husband and goes to a lover', and in practice no ritual is performed when she visits her father after divorce and re-marriage, but it is perhaps significant that such a situation could scarcely have arisen in the past, since divorce by agreement rarely, if ever, occurred. An adulterer fled, if he could, with his lover to another chiefdom, breaking off all relations with her kin.

(b) The overt purpose and symbolism

Now we turn to the Kukwe interpretation of events. Our two principal informants here were Mwasalemba, an elderly pagan man, brother to the chief Porokoto, whose wife, Syungu, acted as officiant at rituals in the chief's family, and Kakune, a young doctor who had learnt the medicines from his mother. Mwasalemba was much more coherent than Syungu herself, and his interpretation was confirmed by Kakune and numerous other informants. Again I give the interpretation of the two principal informants without any editing other than placing consecutively statements made on different occasions.

i. *Mwasalemba's interpretation.* (Recorded by G. W. and translated by him soon afterwards.)

MWASALEMBA: Perhaps a youth, perhaps a girl, runs mad; he runs about naked so that we say: 'He's mad, why doesn't he cover himself?' He goes to the place of defaecation and takes filth and eats it: he goes into people's houses and takes things, he might even take some things from you, from a European, without fear; he knows not what he does. Sometimes, after a visit to a doctor, he recovers altogether and never has the fit again—that is the lesser kind of madness. But sometimes he recovers and then the fit takes him again later—that is the more serious

[1] The loft (*pijulu*) consists of horizontal beams running at wall level across a portion of the hut. Here every married woman keeps a supply of dry firewood. It is her private store-place which may not be touched without her permission.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Kukwe

158 kind. We take such a one [either type] to a doctor, tying a rope round
757 his waist on the way. For if we leave him free he goes and drowns himself in the lake. So then the doctor says 'His heart has suddenly turned over', and gives him a powdered medicine to eat from a bark-cloth. Then when he has eaten the medicine the doctor puts a finger at the back of his tongue to make him vomit, again and again. So then the filth comes out of him. Then the doctor says: 'Don't eat meat or fish until I give you other medicine later.' Then he ties some of the same medicine in two bark-cloths and ties one round his neck, one round his loins. . . .

158 Sometimes a man in the mad fit finds a woman, then he takes the
● 684 leaves off his waist, catches hold of her and, forcing her to the ground, has intercourse with her. Then when the woman returns home she complains that a man in the mad fit has caught and raped her. Then her husband says: 'Well, it's all over now. If he'd been in normal health I'd have sued him for a cow for adultery before the chief, but seeing he is mad there's no point in my doing so, it's all over now!' . . .

158 Sometimes madness comes by itself, although no ritual has been
775 omitted, sometimes because they have not performed a ritual. The symptoms of the two kinds are exactly the same, their cause is different. The one connected with ritual comes because the shades are angry: 'Why have you left that child untreated, without putting stones on its head . . . ? It seems it is of no account.' And then the child goes mad.

757 When madness comes of itself the doctor takes the patient to a
755 waterfall and lets the water tumble on his head; then he makes him vomit, and the vomit is carried away in the water. But that which comes from ritual they don't treat in this way; they make him vomit at home, and then perform the ritual for him.

158 Sometimes madness brings visions (*injosi*)—the man lets everything
787 come in his speech and says of people: 'What sort are they? They are witches!' And if there is a gathering he speaks out: 'You are a witch—you bewitch your neighbour's cows!' So then people ask what he means by letting everything come in his speech like this, and they are told he has the mad fit on him. The madness gives him power to see the witches, he sees them surely. And of old if a madman with the fit on
[683] him accused you of witchcraft you would go at once to drink the ordeal. And if the ordeal accused you too then your house was burnt over you!

764 QUESTION: Why the washing and eating porridge?

MWASALEMBA: If we don't do this then the children will vomit a watery fluid.

I put a direct question to him about the sausages of porridge and he admitted with a smile, rather an embarrassed one: 'Yes, well, you have understood it; yes, it is a symbol of eating excrement . . . we do it at night.'

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

scrapes bananas when she is menstruating, or conceals that she is menstruating and we have intercourse, then my legs are tired, but I do not have diarrhœa, because it is my blood; she is my relative (*nkamu gwangu*), she is my wife, her blood and mine are one. But when she has lain with a man in the bush there is his blood; I have diarrhœa to get rid of it; the food which she cooks for me is dirty, she has made it filthy, I have diarrhœa and get rid of it, she oversteps me. And also if she has concealed that she is menstruating and we have intercourse, I am overstepped. To overstep is to insult—but since the blood is mine I do not get rid of it. That menstrual blood is very dirty!

If I have always been all right and strong, and I find that I get tired walking and hoeing, I think: 'What is it? See, always I was all right, and now I am very tired.' My friends say: 'It is women, you have lain with one who was menstruating.' And if I eat food and start diarrhœa they say: 'It's women, they have committed adultery.' My wives deny it. We go to divine, and one is caught; if she agrees that's that, but if she denied it, formerly we went to the poison ordeal. The woman drank alone, not I. If she vomited then I was defeated, the woman was good, but if it caught her then her father paid one cow.

What we feared greatly in the old days, Mwaipaja, was war. We feared to die. For if my fellow in the village committed adultery with my wife then, when we went to war, we both died; if we went to fight at Mwangomo's [a neighbouring chiefdom], both he and I would be speared. Then people were astonished and said: 'Why, have so-and-so and so-and-so died? Perhaps they both lay with the same woman.' For this reason we drove adulterers from the village, and for this reason the chief was angry with an adulterer, saying: "This is my place! Why do you kill my people?" '

Others confirmed Mwambuputa's statement that adultery led to death in battle:

Formerly, when there was war, if your fellow made love to your wife in secret and you all went to fight, you died on one day on account of the woman.

Mwandisi linked the disquiet in a man's belly with the anger of the shades seated there.

If a woman has gone behind the house with another man and comes and cooks food for her husband, blowing up the fire and cooking for him, then the food turns round in his stomach and says: 'Is this my kinsman?' She made friends with others behind the house and cooked for them [i.e. committed adultery]. So then the man develops diarrhœa because the food turned round in his stomach. He falls down on the road, he falls down in battle.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

837 QUESTION: The spirits are angry?
753 MWANDISI: Yes, they say: 'That woman for whom we gave marriage-
775 cattle has overstepped her husband.' Yes, it is the shades who are angry in his belly.

842 Kakune, a doctor, made it clear that the danger to the husband
837 when his wife committed adultery came from the semen of another
753 man entering her.

If your wife commits adultery you get very tired on a journey, you suffer from diarrhœa; in the old days we fell in war.

QUESTION: What if the adulterer practises *coitus interruptus*?

KAKUNE: Yes, if the man is clean he withdraws and the semen falls to the ground. If he always withdraws when he has intercourse with my wife, then I escape, nothing happens. The woman is like a child. See, when your wife who has not yet reached puberty plays with young men on the veld it is no matter. Do they create a child with her? No! But if she is an adulteress he is there in her, and I am there in her, and Kyala says: 'Ha! Are there two?' And he spears you, the owner of the woman. You are soiled by going to the woman; that is filth. But if I catch an adulterer with my wife, even if he has practised *coitus interruptus*, I am angry and kill him—there is jealousy! But as for diarrhœa, I do not suffer from it.

837 The most dangerous adultery of all, according to the Nyakyusa,
●684 is that of a man with his father's wife. Angombwike explained:

If a man dies and his son has been lying with his wives in secret, whether with or without his permission, the son is very much afraid to approach his father's place. If he goes near or touches the corpse he will himself die, for he is one flesh with his father; their blood has mingled in the woman's belly. He keeps a long way away and so do the
[783] wives with whom he has lain. The leading men of the village are told about it and a doctor is fetched and the son and the wives involved are taken to a waterfall and treated there. If he is the eldest son a younger brother kills the cows meanwhile. Then he comes back to the homestead and kills a cow himself. While you were away in Europe I saw a case of this with my own eyes. A man died whose son had been lying with his wives. As soon as the son approached his father's place he fell down sick to death. People picked him up and rushed him away to a
[783] distance. Then he began to breathe a little easier. They took him to a waterfall and treated him and he recovered, more or less. He is still unwell from time to time. It is not madness, just illness. And if, before the father's death, such a son approaches his father, the old man gets very ill indeed and the elder wives turn the son out of the house. There is none of this trouble if a brother [either a full brother or a half-brother]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

has lain with the dead man's wives. A brother will approach the corpse without fear. But there is another trouble: if a man seduces his brother's wife the husband may have diarrhœa perhaps with bloody stools. Many people do not come to their fathers' funerals before the burial. And also if the father is ill, and they see he is near death, they run away, returning when he has been buried. Because it is said that a man will die if he has slept with his mother, his father's wife, and sees his father or sees the corpse, as did Jones, the son of Kisokora. He slept with his mothers in secret. When his father died (in a different village from that in which Jones lived) Jones seized his father's cattle and ran away with them. When they had buried his father he came to mourn. The women with whom he had slept told on him because he had given them syphilis.

A wife who commits adultery with her husband's son is held to be in great danger also. Mwandisi said:

If they conceal it and approach the grave both the son and the wife will die. Both are washed naked, under a waterfall. The officiant washes them together with a fowl.

QUESTION: Why the waterfall and the nakedness?

MWANDISI: The water is to take away the sickness. Being naked is so that the case may go away and you, the man, may be empty (*bwasi*) and the woman may be empty. For if such a son looks into the grave and approaches to weep, the shades and Kyala are angry and say: 'Are you a relative? How can you look into the grave? It is you who have killed him, by causing him diarrhœa.' And if the woman approaches and holds her dead husband in her arms, then she dies. Those below are angry and say: 'Is she your relative?' And she dies. But if she has committed adultery with someone who is no relation she approaches and does not fear, and the adulterer does not fear either, but approaches.

For a woman, adultery is held to be dangerous also in childbirth:

If she has had lovers, she has a difficult delivery and the child refuses to come out until she confesses. Sometimes she confesses three, then the child comes, it comes out. . . . She confesses the name and takes a bit of stick and spits on it and throws it away, and you will be surprised to see that she gives birth at once. If she is very bad she will tell you three names and throw away three sticks.

Any contact with childbirth is held to be even more dangerous to men than contact with menstruation. It also is thought to cause weakness, and it is warriors who are most affected. Traditionally,

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

585 for the latter having been previously collected from house to house, with a snatch of song at each door. After the feast the bride goes in procession to her husband's house, accompanied by a number of girl friends. The happy couple are chased along the road, beaten with sticks as they go, and advised to treat each other as becomes husband and wife. At the door of her future home a final ceremony has to be performed : the wife of the go-between pours water over the husband's hands, and the bride, kneeling at his feet, receives the water as it falls, and washes her own hands therewith.

382 There are strict rules regarding selection. A man may not take a wife from the family either of his father or of his mother, using the word " family " in the native sense, implying the whole circle of relatives from which each originally came. But there are countless bye-laws. A man has two wives from different families ; the son of one wife may take a wife from the family of the other, the two families not being related ; but a man may not marry the daughter of his paternal uncle, for the latter is his " father," and the girl is his " sister." The daughter of his maternal uncle, again, is his cousin, and he may not marry her, though there is nothing to hinder his father marrying her. The chief Koloso married his father's sister, to the great scandal of his people, although the " father " was really a very distant relative, according to European ideas.

•684 The marriage tie is sacred and binding ; how binding on the wife may be judged from the laying up of

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

the spear which is to slay her if she disregards it. The injured husband, too, has the right to inflict death upon the paramour. This is no mere tale of the past, but a grim fact of to-day. Just a very short time ago, two of my workmen asked a day's leave of absence to go and bury a relative who had suffered the extreme penalty at the hands of an outraged husband. Cases of this nature are very numerous, and are necessarily treated by British law as murder ; but native law still looks upon them as a just reprisal by the husband.

Divorce is granted only for approved reasons. The husband, when he believes he has ground for divorce, requests his go-between to take up the case ; but the latter will do so only if he is satisfied that the evidence is sufficient to secure a verdict in his client's favour. The woman's father fixes a day for the public hearing of the case, himself as judge, for there is an appeal to the chief only if either party is dissatisfied with the decision arrived at. The finding of the court is in all cases reported to the chief.

The commonest cause is unfaithfulness of the wife, which being proved or admitted, there is no further discussion, although the trouble is sometimes patched up by the gift of a cow to the husband. If a wife has conceived, and does not tell her husband, it is a very grave matter indeed, for she is assumed to be trying to hide from him what is not his, and an action for divorce may follow. Barrenness, if known to be of the wife, is a cause of divorce ; but not seldom the wife retorts the charge upon her husband, and cases are not unknown where, by mutual agreement, both

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

682 754 be convinced that the real facts are otherwise than as I have stated. The clumsy methods of murder favoured by the cleverest of European criminals take an inferior place before the successful malignity of this kind of thing.

683 754 627 *Witchcraft.*—No crime is regarded with so much abhorrence among Bantu peoples as the crime of witchcraft. It is a crime against the whole community, anti-social, destructive; and the punishment, in many cases, was death. That punishment cannot now be inflicted, but a recent Ordinance against pretended witchcraft has given much satisfaction to the people, even although the punishment is less than they think the crime demands. To them there is no pretence about it; it is a grave reality. If the poison cup proved a person guilty, he was immediately attacked with any weapon that came handy, and as a rule he was dead before he reached the end of the gauntlet; but if, as now and again happened, he got off alive, he lost no time in getting away to another district. In the not so very remote past, the guilty person was burned to death in his own house, and not always did his family escape a like fate. A special punishment was reserved for witchcraft by crocodile. This particular crime consists in bewitching a crocodile to kill an enemy. The criminal, when discovered, was put into the water in a large fish-trap, and left there until a crocodile came and made an end.

•684 *Adultery.*—This offence is said to have increased greatly since the coming of the white man, who will not permit the death penalty to be inflicted. But the

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

Konde does not resign what he considers his natural right on that account, and will take his chance of the white man's justice, if he can first get in with his own. Dramatically enough, a case occurred while I was working at the first draft of this chapter. A man came into my office, sweating at every pore, excitement in his eyes, and his whole bearing indicating something very unusual. 6 84●

"Well," I said, "who are you? What is your name?"

"I am Mwandobero of Mwakete," he said. "I have killed a man."

"So! And what do you expect me to do about it?"

"Tie me up, and send me to the police."

"It's not my business," I said, "to tie men up. Go to the police yourself."

"Can a man go to the police himself with a story like that?"

"Well," I said, "I will give you a letter, which you can take to the superintendent."

"Thank you, Bwana."

A few questions brought out the facts, which were what I expected them to be. His wife had that morning gone off with another man. The husband pursued the runaway couple, overtook them somewhere in the bush, made a fierce pass at the man with his spear, and then ran the five miles between the scene of the crime and my house. A few hours later I met him, in charge of an armed policeman, going to discover what had actually taken place. He grinned a friendly

8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

583
837 her and then returns to her first husband the cows he had given for her with two in addition as adultery fine. But this return is usually made only after the first husband has brought a lawsuit against him.

837 Adultery is extremely common now-a-days; when a man runs off
● 684 with, or is discovered seducing, a married woman and has not enough
177 cows to marry her, he is legally compelled to pay two cows for the adultery to her husband. In pre-European days an adulterer, if caught, was usually punished by the husband and his neighbours with death or extreme torture, and the old men tell me that adultery was then a rarer event.

584 The extent to which a girl is usually allowed to choose whom she
177 will marry is difficult to guage, and varies in different circumstances. Opportunities of meeting and flirting with young men at dances and ceremonies are frequent; and the older men say that, owing to the abolition by the Europeans of the old severe punishments for adultery, girls
582 are freer now than they used to be, for their lovers no longer fear to run off with them if they are married or bespoken (which is in Nyakyusa law very much the same thing). The custom of betrothing infant girls is, they declare, less common than it used to be; they are now more chary of pledging their daughters "for when they grow up they just run off with someone else." A girl's choice is, however, limited by the necessity of finding a lover who has cows, and few young men have enough to secure her if she is already married, though they may have enough to pay an adultery fine.

428 Owing, in part, to the laws of inheritance, by which a commoner's[5]
593 full-brother inherits before his son, it is the older men who control the cattle. Every bachelor is largely or wholly dependent on his own father (or his dead father's heir) for the cows for his first marriage, and he must hoe his father's fields for many years before he is given enough to secure a wife and to set up a family of his own. Economic reciprocity is an element in most human relationships, and it enters into the Nyakyusa relationship of father and son. It is well understood, in this society, that
593 after a certain length of time spent hoeing his father's fields a young man
685 is entitled to some cows, if his father has any; and if his father delays too long the young man either stops hoeing for his father or else he takes legal action and enforces his claim. Between father and son such law cases are rare, but they are frequent between a young man and the brother of his father who has inherited his father's wives, property, and position in the family.

[5] The laws of inheritance for a chief are, in certain respects, different; vide infra, "The Chiefdom."
3 4 [Cat. 116, pp. 278ff. --Analyst]

8: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

583 Normally a bachelor is given cows one by one, over a period of years, and, as we have seen, he sends them, as he receives them, to the father of the girl he wants to marry. One cow is sufficient for betrothal, but not until he has given three can he begin openly to sleep with her. And he cannot usually set up his own economy until he has given at least three cows and she has reached puberty and been initiated. He may of course bespeak an already grown girl, but if he engages himself to a young one he is expected to bring two or more bulls as well, during the course of her initiation.

●684 If he chooses to spend his cows in adultery fines, he may, but he will then have to wait longer to get married.

582 561 Thus the system of marriage by a transfer of cattle is, in this society, directly linked with a late marriage age for young men and with a privileged position for older men. When a boy gets cattle he at once gives them to an older man in order to secure his daughter as a wife; the labour of every bachelor helps to increase his father's wealth in food; it is in general the older men alone who can afford more than one wife. And there is an average difference of ten years or more in the initial marriage age of men and girls. The tax registers show in part of the district, among 3,000 [162] adult[6] men, 34% bachelors, 37% monogamists, and 29% polygynists; and investigation proves that, generally speaking, it is the young men who are bachelors, the men over forty-five who are polygynists.

511 574 Though cattle are their most valued form of wealth, it is on agriculture that the economy of the Nyakyusa is primarily based. Meat and milk are luxuries, and daily bread comes from the fields. Hard work in a fertile country provides food for each family, and the millet beer which is the ordinary material of hospitality. Hospitality brings a man prestige and authority among his fellows; on the possession of sufficient food largely depends the contentment of his wives. And in the production, preparation and eating of food the relationships of the family and of the individual family within it, are clearly visible.

241 512 Hoeing is the work of men, planting, weeding, reaping and cooking is the work of women. The men, young and old, hoe for about four hours on most mornings of the year; in the lower altitudes they begin well before sunrise and finish about 9 a.m., on the upland plateau they begin later and continue till noon or beyond. The energetic ones sometimes hoe again for an hour or two in the late afternoon. Different

[6]Presumed to be 18 years or over.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

753 entrance to the grove?' Ndembwe told me, 'You will get no cattle',
688 and indeed the cows are aborting. He told me: 'Brew beer and look
[787] for a sheep[1] and pray to your grandfather.'

782 Kasitile did not find an animal for sacrifice. He slaughtered a kid 'just for meat', killing it near the grove, but without praying or taking any of the meat into the grove, for it is not customary to offer goat's meat to the shades. His health improved a little, for a
787 time, but again he got worse and went off to see another diviner, saying: 'Perhaps there is some other cause; perhaps Ndembwe is mistaken.' He decided to go to consult an oracle some distance away 'because the oracle near home does not convince us; those who live near know all our wrongdoings; those at a distance don't know the affairs of the homesteads here'. This time Godfrey Wilson was invited to accompany him 'since he was his friend'.

Record of G.W. 8/2/37

787 We left Isumba about 7 a.m. and walked for an hour over the hills
753 through the bush. Kasitile had sent his wives, Jane and Kililuli, on ahead to tell the diviner, Nsoki, that we were coming. . . . He came in
[791] from the fields to meet us and was taken aback by the presence of a
[186] European. Kasitile kept saying: 'Do not be startled, he is from home, he is our friend.' . . . Food was served, then Nsoki's wife brought out some cooked millet porridge for the divination. He broke off a large piece and began to roll it between his hands. He smeared ointment on his hands and added powdered medicine. . . . He rolled and rolled, sometimes throwing the ball up and catching it again, spitting on his hands meantime. He murmured as he rolled, then at last he said to Kasitile, 'Speak!' Kasitile called his two wives to come near, and he explained his symptoms and the circumstances, how the sickness had fallen on him just after he had cut the tree in the sacred grove.

Nsoki asked for other possibilities. Kasitile: 'Perhaps the country is
● [684] angry—I am a senior there. If it is the fathers who are angry I admit having done wrong. Perhaps my wives have committed adultery in the long grass and they are the cause of the illness.' Nsoki rolled and rolled the ball of porridge speaking aloud: 'It is Kyala above?' (looking up).
[775] Kasitile interrupted him: 'Yes, indeed, Kyala, but Kyala stands where he stood at home, does he stand alone? He stands with the fathers.' Nsoki (as he rolled the porridge): 'Your fathers are angry about that grove?' Then the ball of porridge flattened out in his hands and he broke off . . . 'No, that is not the cause' (*vide* plate 10*b*).

Rolling it into a ball again he went on: 'Your wives have committed

[1] This was Kasitile's own account. Others told us that he had been advised to look for a *bull*.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

All the time there was a constant refrain of questioning, especially from Mwamakunda (who as Kasitile's assistant acts as his mouthpiece to the others: 'But why has Mwakanjoki (60) gone off in a huff? Why?' There was a continuous effort to extract reasons. [783] [782]

The meat from the top of the foreleg (*ijammapa*) was cut up into little portions and some was put aside for the boys, sons of Kasitile. Then Kasitile led the way with a bill-hook and Mwamakunda and I followed. Mwamakunda carried the meat in a leaf. We went to the sacred grove, Kinyangwa. When we reached the edge Kasitile told us to wait and he cut a path into the middle with the bill-hook, then we followed. [778]

Mwamakunda threw the meat slowly, piece by piece, into the rotting stump of an old *umwali* tree, from which a lusty growth had sprung, one shoot being 30 feet high. Kasitile prayed: 'Come Mwakanjoki (60), together with Lwembe (3?), Mwakalebela (19), and the Kinga, come, with—with—with—come. We pray of you millet, maize, bananas, all your food.' (Mwamakunda threw a piece of meat at each word.) 'We are still mourning you, we have tears. We finish now, that is all. Bring bananas, bring millet, maize, children, may the cows calve, stand by us Mwakanjoki (60), N—, N—, N— Lwembe (3?), Mwakalebela (19), Nsyanigwe,[1] Kyamba Kitali,[1] Ngulube (9), N—, N—, N—. Don't come again Mwakanjoki, let us sleep well. This is Mwambagoje [i.e. Mwamakunda the younger. It was his first visit to the sacred grove in place of his father]. I have brought him to you. Do not be startled at this Mwaipaja (G.W.), he is innocent, he is our friend. Move out of my body, let this chill go from my body! We have finished! Amen!' [769]

Kasitile and Mwamakunda gave instructions and suggestions to each other in low voices from time to time during the prayer and throwing of the meat. We went out, Kasitile and Mwamakunda looking ahead, and Kasitile warned me: 'Do not look behind, Mwaipaja.' For the next two days Kasitile said he and Mwamakunda would wash with medicines, and refrain from intercourse with their wives 'because they entered the sacred grove'. [834]

Then we rejoined Mwaipopo and the priests and the meat was cut up. Mwaipopo said: 'Indeed people gossip, where does the whispering go? To whom do the words go? Perhaps they went to you (the commoner) priests?' Kasitile had something on his mind: 'When I returned from Lubaga who came to say: "Thank you, you have arrived back?" [i.e. no one came to greet him formally on his return]. Njobakosa answered this saying that no offence was meant. [689]

Then Njobakosa turned to Mwaipopo (116) and raised the question of his son, Mwaseba (152) who had seduced Mwaipopo's wife, Mpeta. [684]

[793]

[1] The hereditary Kinga priests.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

783 Why had Mwaipopo refused so long to enter into relationship with Mwaseba? Mwaipopo explained that the delay was on account of
782 Mpeta. 'Let my wife come first,' he said, and told how, when the case
[684] first came to light, he had taken Mpeta to his kinsman Mwaiteteja, who took her to Mwaseba's village headman, Kakuju, and he to her people. She must come back the same way, and has not yet done so. Ngulyo said that at first he had been inclined to criticize Mwaipopo, but now saw that he was right. Kasitile spoke of the enormity of Mwaseba's offence, for Mpeta is a kinswoman of Mwaipopo's wife
[835] Kalobo, and on the death of her son Mwakalobo, Mwaseba was put in his place, so he has seduced a woman who, by legal fiction, is his mother, as well as the wife of his father. His act is *doubly* incestuous.

[686] They then spoke of the separation of those who pray at Mbyanga (*vide supra*, p. 80) and blamed them for it. 'Have they millet though? Kyala judges them himself.' Then Kasitile reproved Mwaipopo (the chief) for another matter. 'But you, Mwakagile (116, identified with his grandfather 59) have little wisdom left. Why did you not give some of the beer which we drank recently at your house[1] to the people of Ipinda, the BaKalinga? The food from a distance you should divide.' And Mwaipopo agreed meekly [i.e. Mwaipopo has built with his young wives away from his inherited wife Kalinga (senior widow of 115) and is apt to neglect her; he must send some of the 'food from a distance'—ceremonial presents from affines—to his senior wives, not give it all to his friends and young wives.]

Then there were mutual compliments and self-depreciation between Kasitile and Kissogota (the commoner priest). Kissogota pointed to Mwaipopo and Kasitile, and said: 'You are impressive you, you are impressive, we are mere cannibals (*balyabandi*).' Kasitile replied: 'You are impressive yourself, if I look at you my body changes.'

Suddenly Kissogota got up and pretended to go: 'I am off, friends!' Ngulyo started to protest: 'We have not yet finished, we are speaking.' But Kissogota said, 'No, you told me to "be off"!' He went outside but returned admitting he had been only pretending. Mwaipopo: 'Yes, do you think we don't know you? Drink! Why do you not drink?'

The Mwamakunda began to ask angrily: 'Why do you shut up words in the heart? Why? Do you wish that Mwakisambwe (i.e. Kasitile, 86, identified with his great-grandfather, 30) should become a fool? Kissogota answered: 'We have not yet done so, Mwambagoje (Mwamakunda), we have not yet; do you think we are angry? Who went to fetch Kasitile from the plain? It was we, we went ourselves.'

Njobakosa took up the matter: 'We have power we have, if we
[754] please we can give the chief worms.' (This was said fiercely; Kasitile and Mwaipopo listened without comments. It was the crucial moment

[1] Sent as a present by Mwaipopo's affines.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

If a man has quarrelled with a kinsman, or is conscious of having bitter enemies, or hears that someone with whom he has had a dispute has 'gone to the doctors', he is likely to go to a horn doctor for protective medicine, even though he is perfectly well.

'The horn' is believed to discover and punish the guilty whether they are known to the injured or not, but if someone uses it without just cause the medicine will recoil on himself. The seven cases of using the horn reported to us[1] were all used in revenge: two for theft, two for seduction, and three for withholding cattle due. And it is revenge that was emphasized in one account of the treatment:

> If someone has stolen my cow I go to a doctor and pay him a bull. Then he prepares the medicine (the horn) and stands facing it, with a spear over his shoulder, pointing towards it, and he speaks aloud saying: 'So-and-so, if you have not taken the cow you will recover, if you have eaten it you will die.' Then the breath (*imbepo*) goes to the man named and if he has really stolen the cow he dies. . . .

But another informant, listing the contents of a 'horn', stressed the protective element. It contains 'the bile of a crocodile, the skin of a python, and *inyifiwila* medicine (*vide* p. 58) which has been used to kill men' . . .

> If a witch comes to throttle and kill you then the bile of the crocodile throttles and strikes him [the witch], and the *inyifiwila* does the same, it is to kill the witches, it spears those who come to throttle you. The skin of the python means that if people come to throttle you they find you have changed yourself into a python.

Another type of vengeance magic, *ilyepa*, is thought to work only between blood relatives.

> If your father-in-law is angry it is your children he kills, not yourself. If the diviner says the disease comes from the woman's side of the family the protective medicine is given only to her, not to the man; if from his side only he is protected, not the wife. The relative who is angry drinks a medicine; he puts a barbed spear into the fire and when it is red hot he slashes a banana sucker with it and speaks the name, then the kinsman who is mentioned dies.

A third type is that used to secure property (*ukusinga*) and snare thieves or adulterers; for the exclusive rights of a husband over his wife are treated as property rights. Often a medicated stick is placed in a field to ward off thieves, and some husbands

[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 210-56.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

789 751 754 [753] are said to give their wives a medicine (without their knowledge) which will cause any man who lies with them to fall ill of gonorrhoea or some other venereal disease. Many Christians believe in this medicine and some inquired whether Europeans did not use it also. One family of doctors are specialists in it:

[791] The sons of Manyafu are very famous, they are great doctors. People fear them very much. No one can steal anything belonging to them or run off with their wives. If a man runs off with a wife of theirs, he will return their wife and pay. . . . Because when he has slept with the woman by night they stink in each other's nostrils, the woman stinks in the face of the man and he likewise in hers. And if rain falls by night the roof comes off the hut in which they sleep and the rain enters. Perhaps the man quarrels with the woman, perhaps frogs and snakes are numerous, perhaps gourds sprout in the house—sometimes they sprout bringing evil. So it is also if a man has run off with the wife of another and the husband goes to the sons of Manyafu. They agree to work, but he must pay them.

[681] Lyandileko, whose husband's family have owned a 'horn' for generations, was very insistent that vengeance magic maintained law and order for it could injure only the guilty. 'A thief feared to steal lest he be caught by my father-in-law (Mwaisyelage). He feared the horn if he used sorcery. He feared to seize another's cow thinking, "They will go to Mwaisyelage".' [684] And protective medicines which cause an adulterer to fall ill of gonorrhoea, or a thief to die, are considered perfectly legitimate; the misfortune would not have befallen the man unless he had done wrong.

[648] The prohibition by the government of the *mwafi* oracle has puzzled people. Medicines are admittedly dangerous, but it is held that Europeans 'encourage' witches and sorcerers by forbidding the use of the one effective weapon against them, and doctors with vengeance magic or other strong medicines 'fear the fate of the *mwafi* doctors'. There is an inescapable contradiction here, the Nyakyusa relying on *mwafi* and vengeance magic as a means of discovering criminals, and the Europeans punishing any doctor found administering poison, or intimidating people by threats. Furthermore, it is widely believed that Europeans themselves [186] use strong medicines made up with blood. Any Europeans without an obvious occupation are suspect of being *abanyambuta*, who go around killing people and taking their blood for the Government to use for medicines. One of our European friends,

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

769 782 Sacrifice is offered that a particular shade, or all the shades of the lineage, may be 'satisfied, assuaged'. The word used is *ukuhoboka* which is also used of a man who has been hungry and has eaten well of fine food, of a man who has married a bride who pleases him, and of a living father or father-in-law who has been angry but is now pacified. In its applicative form, *ukuhobokela*, means to forgive. And the act of sacrifice is an offering, a gift, to the shade strictly comparable to the gift a young man makes to his father when 'begging pardon' for some offence. A son who has committed the most heinous offence of all, seducing one of his [684] father's wives, can 'beg pardon' only by offering a cow; but many [783] smaller offerings are made by juniors to seniors to beg forgiveness for lesser offences.[1] When a cuckolded father receives his son he kills the cow brought to him and eats with his neighbours. It is held to be essential that the living who are insulted (and a man's neighbours are insulted with him) should share in the meat and express satisfaction.[2]

Other conceptions also are, however, manifest in sacrifices. At the offering to a recently dead chief the sacred cut of the meat is divided between the shade, whose portion is placed on the earth near his grave (ideally beside the stone set up at his marriage), and his young grandsons, who are identified with him. The conclusion that this is a communion between the living and the dead is inescapable. At a sacrifice to Lwembe it is certain of the hereditary priests, and they alone, who may share the sacred cut. At the sacrifices made by private persons the communion between shades and grandchildren is explicit when an offering of fish is made.[3] It is less clear in the sacrifice at a funeral, but is made plain [764] in the eating of grain or bananas with the *ikipiki* medicine which symbolizes the lineage. Then the shade is told 'all the food we have eaten you have eaten . . . farewell.' The communion of sacrifice is indeed but one manifestation of the identification of the participants in a ritual with the shades for, as has been shown in a previous book, the essential character of all the rituals of kinship is a death and rebirth, a death in which the participants—the kinsmen chiefly concerned—are made one with the shades and born anew,[4] and this theme is repeated in the ritual of the 'coming out'.

769 783 One paradox remains to be clarified. The shades must be

[1] *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 181-6.
[2] *Good Company*, pp. 107, 240.
[3] *Rituals of Kinship*, p. 185.
[4] *ibid.*, pp. 203-5.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

797 cook. I want to leave him.' She said to her husband: 'I want to leave
795 you; I should like to be married to another man. I am not old; I shall
754 not fail to get a husband.' The case went to the Church Session. The
husband was called. He said: 'I am astonished. This woman is just
[685] making trouble. I have not harmed her. But she is a thief. She steals
my mother's things.' She said: '*He* is mean. He watches me when I am
cooking—either ordinary food or meat. He is a wicked man so I am
leaving him.' The Session said: 'Go home and think first.' She came
again and said: 'I will leave him.' They said: 'Go and think again.'
They sent her home three times. After the third time she came, saying:
'I will leave him.' Then the missionary said: 'We do not find any cause
for divorcing your husband. It is astonishing that you, a Christian,
wish to go to another man. We find many faults on your side and none
on your husband's side. I tell you that the trouble which made you
quarrel with your husband will always stay in you. Wherever you go
it will follow you.' So she has now become a wanderer, just going
about from place to place. People say that this is due to the words of
the missionary.

This story shows very clearly how a missionary's insight into a woman's character was interpreted as an external cause of her subsequent misfortunes. The idea that character is a direct cause of misfortune is foreign to the pagan community, and has not been assimilated by many Christians.

On one occasion two Christian teachers and a Christian clerk, who had related several stories in which loss of a job was attributed to a curse, asked our opinion of them. When we explained that we thought that the people mentioned had lost their jobs because they were unsatisfactory servants or teachers our friends expressed surprise. 'I had not thought of that,' said the clerk.[1]

Most of the Nyakyusa Christians we talked to believed in a curse exercised by those in authority in the Church: only a few among the better educated of the leaders scouted the idea. And there were lively arguments about the morality of cursing. Many held it was perfectly justified. Others argued that a Christian should only rebuke his fellow 'openly, to his face', and not curse him but leave the punishment of sinners to God; but, as has just been shown, an open rebuke is often interpreted as a curse.

Often a judgement is thought to be delayed. One young man
● [684] who committed adultery in particularly offensive circumstances was eaten, seven years later, by a crocodile, and the two facts

[1] Quoted with amendments from 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, x (1937), pp. 273-4.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

were connected. And if the expected judgement does not fall when a son has wronged his father it is said: 'The father loves the child so much that he only complains half-heartedly.'

It is admitted (when the point is pressed) that misfortunes *may* fall on good men as well as evil, and then they are interpreted as a discipline, a testing, from God, but this is 'a hard saying', scarcely to be believed. The *inequalities* in the fortunes of men demand explanations and Christians, as well as pagans, find it very difficult to believe that they are 'natural'. They always suspect some human intervention; they believe that men manipulate mystical power to buy fortune for themselves. The reality of pythons in the belly may be doubted by the better educated, but belief in 'medicines' has scarcely diminished, and new medicines are constantly coming in from outside, among them costly patent medicines guaranteed to cure any and every disease, or to make the user popular and successful. Some sort of distinction between medicines which it is permissible for a Christian to use and those, like love-potions and defence against witchcraft, which are not permissible, is attempted, but the line is an arbitrary one. And often there is a conflict in the individual's own mind: as one elderly woman of a chief's family (who would normally have taken the first-fruits medicines) put it: 'It's taboo to use these medicines; even if we do fall ill we say: "No, I will not take it, I look towards God (pointing upwards)."'

Most Christians have pagan kinsfolk who are quick to interpret misfortunes in pagan terms, and the sort of conflict of ideas that arises is illustrated in the case of a young woman who died in childbirth. She and her father were Moravians; her husband had joined the Pentecostal Church which rejects all Nyakyusa medicines. Her first child was still-born, the second died shortly after its birth, and her father insisted that she should have been taking a medicine which it was customary for women in his lineage (he was a Penja) to drink during pregnancy; the girl herself wished to be treated, for she did not accept the teaching of the Pentecostal Church on this point, but her husband refused. During her third pregnancy she was ill and finally, with her husband's consent, she was carried to a Nyakyusa doctor of her father's choosing; nevertheless she died. Her father and her husband had been on bad terms, the father demanding, rather arbitrarily, the balance of the marriage cattle; and there was a great deal of gossip, some neighbours hinting that her own father had killed

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

by immersion and were strict about not eating the flesh of animals without a cloven hoof, and avoiding beer, but made a point of not being sabbatarian and working in their fields on Sundays—these were the things they emphasized to us. They were also pacifist and would not join the Police or King's African Rifles, since Rutherford taught that all Government was evil.

(*d*) 'INDEPENDENT' AFRICAN CHURCHES

There is a great cleavage between the mission Churches and the 'independent' African Churches, which also claim to be Christian, read the Gospels at their services, and recite the Apostles' creed, but whose rules of life are avowedly based on the Old Testament rather than the New (*vide* p. 191). Both the 'independent' Churches operating in BuNyakyusa approve polygyny; the bulk of their members are middle-aged polygynists and they have at least as many men as women among them. Nyasuru's statement on polygyny was interesting:

> When we young men went to join the mission we found that many of our fathers were attracted by it. They said to us: 'If only the Europeans would let us come in with all our wives we would come.' . . . Sometimes it would happen that the son of an old man's second wife would join the mission and become a preacher and he would preach even to his father, saying: 'You pagans do wrong, you marry many women, you must repent, your ways are evil.' Then his father would say to him: 'On the contrary, it is not I who do wrong, if I had married only one wife you would never have been born, and you young men take one wife only and then what happens? You steal other men's wives, continually, in secret, and the country is full of lawsuits about women. It is our custom which is good.' . . . And so we, now, we have our Church and our fathers come in with us. It is our aim to take the old people with us, not ourselves to go forward alone. All the other matters which the missionaries brought to us we think are good, only this European custom of marriage is difficult.

Nyasuru and Ngemela had both been suspended from the Church of Scotland Mission for marrying second wives, and Nyasuru, a man of fifty-three, had four wives when we knew him. He kindly provided us with a copy of a statement on the beliefs and constitution of the African National Church, which is worth quoting in full:

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

going about visiting them in their homes and leading them in a Christian life and to report to his Session all the offending members. 797x 795x

It shall be the duties of a Preacher to go about preaching the Gospel to beginners as well as helping Pastors to encourage members at the Church on Sundays. He should keep records of his itinerary and report the same to his district Pastor. [793]

It shall be the duties of every Deacon whether male or female, to see that all members pay their monthly contribution which is one penny per month and to bring monies or foodstuffs to his or her Pastor at the end of every month, and to bring to the Session those who neglect to pay.

Pastors through the Presiding Pastor are empowered to administer Sacraments—to Baptize and dispense Holy Communion and to ordain or remove any Elder, Preacher or Deacon who neglects his or her duties, and to report their activities to their Presiding Pastor.

To clear away suspicions among the people, Christians or non-Christians, Pastor or Pastors in the district if found guilty of misconduct or any case of adultery shall be brought to their Session to be tried, and if found guilty shall be suspended from the ministerial duties until his case is referred to the Annual General Conference by his District Pastor. [684]

Any Presiding Pastor or Pastors found intentionally violating these rules as constituted and approved by the Annual General Conference shall, at the discretion of the said General Conference, be suspended or expelled from the Church.

All monies of the Church shall within three months' time be forwarded to the Secretary of Religion who shall Bank same in the Savings Bank.

The term of service for Elders and Deacons or Deaconesses shall be for two years only, but an office-bearer may also be suspended before the end of his or her term if: [681]

He or she has committed misconduct.
He or she neglects to fulfil his or her duties.
He or she does not attend Church worship.
He or she is a drunkard.
He or she is unruly.
He or she marries unlawfully against Native law which binds African marriages.

No office-bearer of any rank shall be found preaching when he is drunk, but shall hand the Service over to someone else.

Every member of the African National Church shall kneel down when praying. One who is preaching can kneel or stand.

Every member of the African National Church shall cease to drink

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

797 went away to work again and in time I earned four cows which I
795 hid with friends far from home. My father knew nothing about
583 them. Then I wrote to my father from Mwasebe [about twenty
584 miles from where his father lived] where I was working, saying that I had found a girl there, the daughter of a Christian, and please could I have the cows with which to marry her? My father said: "No, she lives too far away." ' Then later he found a Christian girl of whom his father approved and a satisfactory marriage was arranged.

A common topic of discussion among Christian women was whether parents should choose mates for their children, or leave them free to choose for themselves, for though traditionally a girl had to signify her consent to marriage, she was betrothed very young and her freedom of choice was small. The growing insistence on personal freedom in marriage is symptomatic of a radical change in the attitude towards persons.

797 The pagan rituals were the main occasions of recreation. It has
795 been shown, in *Rituals of Kinship*, how pagan funerals and marriages
[764] are the occasion for feasting and dancing and display, and how the
[585] seclusion hut of a nubile girl is the gathering place for the young
[782] men and girls of the neighbourhood. Even a twin ritual is a festival with beer for the older men and some meat for everyone. The sacrifices at the groves were feasts for the leading men of the country, and the 'coming out' was the occasion of the greatest feast of the generation, and dances were practised for months
[796] ahead. Partly because of a change in sex morality, and partly
[688] because the meat and beer at pagan feasts are offered to the shades, Christians are largely excluded from these festivals. They may not participate in pagan dances, or join in the lewd songs, or attend the initiation hut of a girl, and they are partly debarred from the feasts of the pagans: certain of the Churches (notably the Church
[273] of Scotland and, for a time, the Moravians) forbid Christians to drink beer at all.

[796] And the Christian rituals, though some of them are 'festivals of the Church', are scarcely celebrated as such. There has been a separation between ritual and recreation which has left a gap in the Christian community. It is true that the Christian young men
[535] and girls sing and dance at funerals and marriages, but the elders,
[684] for the most part, look on with dubious eyes, saying that dancing leads to adultery, and several of the dances introduced by

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

Christians in Ngonde (e.g. *amapenenga*) have been banned by the Kirk Sessions. The European-style dances, such as are sometimes organized by the educated men in centres like Karonga or Tukuyu, are not attended by these men's wives: respectable women avoid them. While we lived near Rungwe mission there was much discussion among the villagers over what recreations were permissible, and hot arguments between those who wished to permit beer drinking and dancing to Christians and those who wished to ban both. It is the Nyakyusa elders who are most puritan in their views—much more so than many of the missionaries who are very conscious of the need for recreation; indeed, the Livingstonia Presbytery once instructed all its Sessions to look into the matter. The chief outlet for young Christians is in ballads. A good singer is much admired and the composer may even sell his songs, with words and music written out. One of the former missionaries is honoured as the man who first taught the Nyakyusa to read music as well as to sing by ear.

In pagan thought moral obligations are limited to kinsmen and neighbours: they do not extend beyond the chiefdom except to those relatives who may live beyond its bounds. As we have shown, the common moral sanctions are the anger of senior relatives, and 'the breath of men', and these operate only within the lineage and age-village. But Christians have read the parable of the Good Samaritan and taken it to heart. Sermons stress this: 'If a Kinga comes and asks for a place to sleep the night and you refuse you are among the goats.' 'If a traveller from the coast asks for a place to sleep and you refuse, do you show love?' 'We tell a bride she should be hospitable to her neighbours if she can, but she *must* cook for those from a distance.' It is one of the points on which the Christians are most conscious of a difference between themselves and the pagans. And the exclusiveness of Europeans is one of the reasons why they are distinguished from Christians in the song on the title page of *Rituals of Kinship*. 'If all Europeans made friends with us (*ukwangala*) like X and Y', we were told, 'the whole country would have been Christian long ago.'

Linked with the concern for strangers is the obligation to preach the Gospel to others—something constantly stressed in sermons, and finding expression both in preaching in the surrounding villages and in tours of more remote areas, often areas of another language. Such tours implied hardship in travelling and a